

Message

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Environment & Energy
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[bloomberg@bna.com]
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[Duffy.Rick@epa.gov]
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Benefits • Pakistan and
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Environmental Law
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Roundup's Benefits • Pakistan and Renewables • Environmental Law Gathering



By [Chuck McCutcheon](#)

The weed killer Roundup and its active ingredient, glyphosate, have drawn [much unwanted attention](#) of late. But glyphosate still has its advocates.

"As it stands, glyphosate is really the best tool we have for fighting invasive plants," says Brendan Quirion, an invasive species specialist with The Nature Conservancy, the world's largest conservation advocacy group.

With those plants becoming a bigger threat, conservation groups and land managers [worry](#) that glyphosate might soon be off-limits or severely curtailed. Across the Adirondack Park in New York where Quirion is based, The Nature Conservancy has removed over 1,000 infestations of invasive plants.

Bayer AG, which acquired Monsanto last year, faces suits by some 8,700 people who blame their cancer on Roundup.

PAKISTAN AND RENEWABLES: Pakistan, a country whose energy mix is dominated by fossil fuels, is making a new push toward renewables.

The move could help address debt that is paralyzing the country's energy sector, analysts say. Governments in Pakistan have been borrowing to run big power plants, falling into debt with oil and gas producers.

The government recently granted a five-year tax exemption for any company established "for manufacturing of equipment used in generation of renewable energy," as long as the company begins operations between next month and June 30, 2023.

"I think this is going to be a very important step," says Irfan Yousuf, director for the solar sector at the Alternative Energy Development Board of Pakistan's Energy Ministry.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW: The two-day Environmental Law 2019 conference gets under way with panels on regulatory and legal developments on chemicals, climate change, and other topics.

EPA General Counsel Matthew Leopold will be on a panel dealing with Clean Air Act compliance and enforcement trends. In addition, John Cruden, the Justice Department's environmental enforcement chief under President Obama, will join Environmental Law Institute President Scott Fulton in assessing what to expect from the Trump administration on deregulation and its other priorities.

Other panels will examine new Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh's influence on environmental cases; Superfund and hazardous-waste law developments; litigation over fluorinated compounds and other emerging contaminants; and state, local, and international actions on climate change.

OTHER STORIES WE'RE COVERING

- The Senate energy committee discusses the status and outlook of energy innovation. Witnesses include Paul Dabbar, the Energy Department's undersecretary for science, and former Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz.
- The House's energy and water spending panel examines energy trends with Energy Information Administration chief Linda Capuano and Matt

Sonnesyn, the Business Roundtable's vice president for infrastructure, energy, and environment.

- The House Transportation and Infrastructure panel discusses investing in infrastructure. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Minnesota Democratic Gov. Tim Walz, and former Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood are scheduled to testify.
- California nonprofit CalDesal holds its annual conference on desalinating water in Palm Springs.
- Responsiveness, predictability, and familiarity are among the qualities that good outside counsel should possess, Bill Morrison, a partner at Haynes and Boone LLP in Dallas, writes in an Insight.
- Two freshmen Republicans—North Dakota's Kevin Cramer and Indiana's Mike Braun—will hold gavels on Senate Environment and Public Works Committee panels. Cramer will chair the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife, while Braun will chair the Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety. Cramer and Braun are the only two freshmen additions to the panel.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"There must have been a conversion on the road to Damascus recently."
—California Democratic Rep. Jerry McNerney, using a reference coined after the biblical story of the apostle Paul's conversion to Christianity to describe Republicans' shift in tone on climate change.

AROUND THE WEB



Beachgoers pack their belongings near the end of a hot day in Huntington Beach, Calif., in July 2018.
Photographer: Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images

- 2018 was the fourth-hottest year in 139 years, with December being the second-warmest December during that period.
- The National Renewable Energy Laboratory is partnering with pdvWireless to look at the performance of private Long Term Evolution (LTE) broadband networks and speed up developing and validating ways to enhance the

resilience of distribution systems, including microgrids, with high penetration of distributed energy resources.

- The EPA is touting the use of water quality trading to reduce the threat of algal blooms that are killing fish and other vegetation in the nation's waters. Water quality trading allows municipal owned water facilities or power plants to pay farmers and other pollution sources to reduce the flow of nutrients in fertilizers and manure from flowing into nearby waters.
- Peabody Energy, the nation's largest coal producer, will be cutting production and sales of its high-quality coal from Wyoming's North Antelope Rochelle Mine—the country's biggest coal mine—by 10 million tons. The St. Louis-based giant reported fourth-quarter net income of \$261 million and \$1.4 billion in revenues, outpacing Wall Street's expectations. But Peabody also said it expects sales volumes to sink in 2019 "in the face of lower domestic demand."
- New Jersey residents face a possible "rain tax" allowing municipalities to collect fees from homeowners and businesses with large parking lots, driveways and other paved surfaces on which rainwater mixes with pollutants before quickly entering sewers and drains.

TODAY'S EVENTS

- **All Day • NASEO •** National Association of State Energy Officials conference continues.
- **8:30 a.m. • Climate •** U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and EcoAgriculture Partners hold roundtable on future of policy and finance for climate-smart partnerships in the global sphere.
- **10 a.m. • Nominations •** Senate Judiciary Committee considers nomination of William Barr for attorney general along with that of Patrick Wyrick, a protege of former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, to be a U.S. district judge in Oklahoma.
- **1 p.m. • Climate •** National Academies' Board on Environmental Change and Society holds forum on social vulnerability, drivers of and responses to climate change, and data and analyses to understand interactions between human and natural systems.

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